# ESF 8 Health & Medical Area Command Bulletin





PREPARING FOR FLOODING IN THE GREEN RIVER VALLEY

October 28, 2009 Bulletin #8

#### The Situation

Due to the significant risk of flooding during periods of heavy rain throughout the lower Green River Valley, including the cities of Auburn, Kent, Renton, and Tukwila, a number of preparedness efforts are taking place.

Emergency management offices in the affected cities, as well as King County and Public Health Seattle and King County, are working to help residents and businesses in the Valley prepare for the possibility of a flood. Key planning assumptions include:

 Building & infrastructure impacts may occur throughout the Green River valley ranging from SR 18 to the south, up to I-405 to the north.

- Utility outages may last days or weeks
- Major and minor roadways throughout the Green River Valley, including parts of SR 167 may be impassable
- Evacuations will occur prior to flooding so that all roads are available for emergency responders

Health and Medical preparedness efforts continue to focus on:

- Business Continuity for Public Health Operations:
  - 9 PH sites at risk
  - Need to maintain vaccine operations
- Medical Evacuation
   Planning: In collaboration
   with KC Metro and EMS
  - Alternate Care

     Facility Planning: 2
     sites have been pre-identified, working closely with Human Service
     Agencies
  - Providing Clinical
    Support to General
    Population Shelters:
    Assessing clinical
    care needs for
    general population
    shelters and
    developing care
    model
  - Environmental
    Health Planning:
    Working with
    partners to mitigate
    potential
    environmental
    contamination
    regarding
    hazardous materials

## Information & Resources

#### US Army Corps of Engineers Green River Valley Flood Maps

http://www.nws.usace.army.mil/PublicMenu/Doc\_list.cfm?sitename=HHD&pagename=Green River Maps

### Green River Critical Infrastructure Resilience Interdependencies Workshop

Focus on potential flood impacts and risk mitigation **November 12, 2009** 

8:00 AM - 5:00 PM For more information contact: Brandon Hardenbrook

brandon@pnwer.org 206-443-7723

### **Green River Flooding Information**

Includes USGS gage data, alert phases, and recent high flows:

http://green.kingcounty.gov/rivergaged ata/gage-data.aspx?r=green

#### Hazardous waste disposal

Help to ensure flood waters do not contain hazardous materials. Get information on safe disposal of hazardous household materials: www.govlink.org/hazwaste/house

1-888-TOXIC-ED (1-888-869-4233)

## Information on responding to sewage overflows

http://www.kingcounty.gov/sewagespills

# Keep food and water safe after a natural disaster or power outage

http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/preparedness/disaster.aspx

# About this Bulletin:

Health and Medical
Area Command is
activated at Public
Health - Seattle & King
County to coordinate
health, medical and
mortuary planning for
regional hazards
including H1N1
influenza and the
Howard Hanson Dam Green River Valley
flood risks.

This bulletin provides key situational updates, planning activities, resources and information specific to health, medical and mortuary response.

# critical resources

King County Office of Emergency Management

Public Health – Seattle & King County

US Army Corps of Engineers

Flood insurance

Personal & Family Preparedness

### Green River Flooding

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**ARE YOU READY?** 

### **Transportation FAQs**

# Will roads be closed if the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers releases a large amount of water from Howard Hanson Dam?

Yes. Many homes and businesses in the lower Green River Valley that don't typically see floodwater—including parts of Auburn, Kent, Renton, Tukwila and unincorporated King County—could be flooded. Major roads may be closed and transit service could be disrupted. Entire neighborhoods may need to be evacuated, depending on the extent of the flooding.

### At what point will roads be closed?

Roads and bridges are closed when crews determine they are no longer safe for travel due to flooding or other hazards, such as downed power lines. Never drive through standing water or drive around a road closed signs. This is how most lives are lost during floods.

# Will evacuation routes be identified in response to the heightened threat of flooding?

Yes. King County and other government service providers in the valley have been working together to identify key evacuation routes. The goal of this coordinated effort is to identify the least flood-prone routes providing the quickest and safest passage away from areas considered vulnerable to flooding. Maps detailing these evacuation routes will be made available this fall. King County and other transportation providers also plan to install signs on roads pre-identified as evacuation routes. Information about evacuation routes will also be posted on the county's Web site at:

http://www.kingcounty.gov/safety/FloodPlan/GreenRiverValley.aspx

# Find preparedness tips and sign up for email alerts from Public Health-Seattle & King County about Green River Basin Flooding

http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/ health/preparedness/greenriverbasin.aspx

### How long does it take to reopen roads after a flood?

King County road crews will not reopen a road or bridge until it has been inspected for damage and debris has been cleared. Following a flood, it can take days for water to recede from roadways, depending on the extent of the flood and the ability for water to drain. That's why the county suggests identifying alternate travel routes as part of your preparedness planning.

## Once floodwaters have receded, how will King County determine which roads to reopen first?

Roads are inspected and reopened when water recedes and the county has determined they can be safely reopened. County arterials will be prioritized for clean up and repair based on their overall importance in moving people and goods. Roads that carry a large amount of people and freight and connect to hospitals, fire stations, police stations, schools, and other important facilities are considered priorities.

### Will flooding and road closures impact Metro Transit bus service?

Depending on the extent of flooding in the Green River Valley, bus riders could experience disruptions in service. Sound Transit Sounder trips could also be impacted, which could result in increased demand for bus service.

Metro has identified several bus and DART routes that could be affected by significant flooding. Service at transfer locations, including the Kent Station/Transit Center and the Kent/James Street Park-and-Ride could also be impacted. Increased traffic on major transit corridors such as I-5 and I-405 could cause additional service delays.

## What is Metro doing to plan for these potential service disruptions?

Given the potential for disruptions, Metro has identified replacement bus service when regular routes can no longer be operated due to flooding. However, service on some existing routes would have to be suspended until roadways could be reopened. That's why transit customers should identify back-up travel plans as part of their pre-flood planning. Alternative service for Metro routes serving the Green River Valley will be available on Metro Online later this fall.

## Where can I receive more information on evacuation procedures?

You can check with your city's local emergency management office for any special evacuation routes and warning information.

### **Emergency management offices:**

Auburn:253-876-1925Kent:253-856-4440Renton:425-430-7000Tukwila:206-433-0179King County:206-296-3830

### in the news

<u>"Flood Insurance for</u> <u>Green River Valley"</u>

KUOW News October 27, 2009

"Green River flooding could leave 800K without sewage for months"

> KIRO TV.com October 23, 2009

<u>"Senators, congressmen</u> <u>call for weather, river</u> <u>monitoring resources at</u> <u>Hanson Dam"</u>

> Auburn Reporter October 22, 2009

<u>"Lawmakers want better forecasting for Green River"</u>

SeattlePI.com October 21, 2009

"'Mega shelters' in the
works for Green River
Valley flood preparations"
Kent Reporter
October 21, 2009

"Concern rising as flood season nears in Green River Valley"

> Seattle Times October 10, 2009

"Rush to finish barrier at Howard Hanson Dam before heavy rains"

Seattle Times October 5, 2009

"Green River Valley flood scare spurs sales of sandbags, pumps"

Puget Sound Business Journal

<u>"Washington's Green River</u> <u>Prepares for a Flood"</u>

> Time Magazine September 30, 2009

### questions?

Please email healtheoc@kingcounty.gov